

Buy one, get a new life

Today's advertisers create false visions of how Americans should live

The right haircut can make you Grace Jones, the right shoes can make you Ru Paul, and castration can make you Michael Jackson. These are the types of myths advertisers force down the public's collective throat like an 8-pound Wisconsin cheese wheel down Oprah Winfrey. Thank God for them, because we would live in a soulless, hopeless world without them.



JASON BENNYHOFF

Advertisers seek to associate inane products with desirable qualities outside themselves. Tampons make women irresistible to men and breath fresheners turn couch potatoes into suave, leisure-suit-wearing pimps straight from a **Blacksplatter** film — just like in real life. Advertisers feel people will buy products if they think they will make them more glamorous, more beautiful or less pathetic. The fact is most people will never be as famous as the stylish Monica Lewinsky or as sexy as the ravishing Roseanne Barr. So why do advertisers try to make them believe that the right toilet cleaner will cure their halitosis and make them movie stars?

Advertisers do this because they love us. If not for advertising, mankind would wallow in its own filth, godless and blind, waiting for its time to die. Thank God for the gift of advertising; if not for that, I would pray to be cast into hell where I could suffer for eternity rather than living in this cesspool of hopeless humanity.

The myth of the American Dream is that everyone, with the right work ethic, can raise himself from the pit of hell — let's call it "College Station" — to the peaks of heaven, also known as "Hollywood." Knowing that

most Americans hold this myth to be true, advertisers use it to give the average peon hope. Advertisers are the teaspoon of water to the man in the desert; they are the Rohypnol to the **sex addict**, and the opiate of the masses. The greatest saint in this crusade to save the human soul is the alcohol industry. It not only provides people with a product that simultaneously makes them forget their problems and provides an excuse for marital infidelity, but it gives people hope that no matter how hideous they may be, at any given keg party they can become beautiful. **Drunkness** is the ultimate expression, drinking our national pastime and vomiting our national sport.

However, there are those who vilify the alcohol brewers. Some say alcohol causes liver problems and is responsible for numerous driving deaths. Many people believe these vicious rumors are true. Who would dare cast aspersions on the reputation of such upstanding citi-

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zens as brewers? Only the people who are against all that is good and wholesome about America, that's who. The problem is that the anti-drinking zealots are gaining momentum in this country. It is up to the advertisers to protect the reputation of the breweries and keep hope alive for America. However, complaints against businesses are only the second most important problem in this country.

The biggest danger facing the United States is not cancer. It is not AIDS. It is the **degradation** and humiliation of advertisers. Please note: The degradation and humiliation of normal people is just another reason to get up in the morning. Dragging innocent people through the mud, beating them and pulling down their shorts in public is just a fact of life, but hurting the people who make life worth living — the advertisers — is downright sadistic.

Advertisers give the average person hope and entertainment, so why are they not treated as national assets? How dare the liberal left-wingers say the **commercialization** of our most cherished traditions, like church and monster truck rallies, is a bad thing? Really, we want the pope's robes to be made by Gucci because, let's face it, he is just way behind. How can putting John Paul II in a pair of Gucci shoes and Versace leather pants be a bad thing? Not only will it provide work for even more sweatshop laborers than ever, but it will enhance the pope's legacy as a cooler, more modern octogenarian.

This is what advertising is all about, and if supporting that makes me a slave to "The Man" then call me a man-whore and whip me because this is what **makes life worthwhile**.



RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

WRITER'S BLOCK

- A = Literary classic
- B = A cut above
- C = Passable reading
- D = Don't buy it
- F = Waste of paper

Sophie's World
Jostein Gaarder
Berkeley Books
Book courtesy of Barnes & Noble

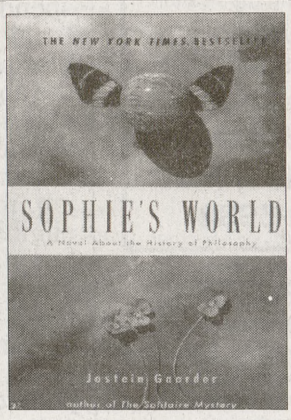
Sophie's World, a sometimes painfully ambitious novel by Jostein Gaarder, weaves the story of almost-15-year-old Sophie Amundsen and a long-winded course on philosophy into a mystery novel that leaves the reader wondering where fiction ends and reality begins.

In the first few pages, young Sophie begins receiving mysterious letters from an unknown philosopher, as well as postcards for a young girl, Hilde Knag. The letters, each a small treatise on different highlights in philosophical thought, build on each other until Sophie meets her secret correspondent and teacher, the philosopher Alberto Knox. Together, they talk philoso-

phy and eventually uncover the reason for the cryptic postcards.

The novel spans a few months in Sophie's life and several hundred years of thought, with chapters highlighting great thinkers from Democritus to Kierkegaard. Each chapter outlines a particular mode of thought or philosopher, and Gaarder uses Sophie's curiosity as a way to further delve into passages or ideas that could prove difficult for readers to digest the first time around. For anyone looking for an introduction into philosophy, this book is the perfect chance to learn a great deal about the basics without too much effort.

However, there is a price to all of this philosophic prognostication — the reader must wade through almost 150 pages before the mystery beings to take shape, and, to be blunt, for



the novel to register anything truly interesting. More troubling is the occasionally patronizing, always lecturing, method in which the philosophy is imparted.

Once Sophie and Alberto meet, her interjections are, at best, half-hearted attempts by the author to recreate the Socratic method outlined in the book's earlier chapters. At worst, they only keep the reader from putting the book down after Knox, or Gaarder,

rather, drones on for pages at a time about which even a philosopher is at hand.

Gaarder has to be given credit for trying to combine philosophical thought and contemporary fiction, but unless readers enjoy being continuously lectured, *Sophie's World* will not hold their interests for long. (Grade: C)

— Beverly Mireles

Naked Came the Manatee
Carl Hiaasen, editor
Fawcett Publishing
Book courtesy of Barnes & Noble

What should one do when a manatee named Booger leaves the cryogenically frozen head of Fidel Castro on one's doorstep?

This is the plot of *Naked Came the Manatee*. This dark

mix of espionage and screw-ups set in Cuban Miami is an honorable attempt to reproduce Douglas Adams' dry wit while incorporating a uniquely Floridian flavor.

The plot revolves around an obese gangster, a 102-year-old environmentalist, an ambitious reporter, a sleazy lawyer and former president Jimmy Carter — who are all pursuing the cryogenically frozen head of Cuba's dictator for their own diabolical purposes. The problem arises when more heads begin showing up in the process.

Of course this absurd plot is beyond believable, but keep in mind the actual hijinks of the CIA in its assassination attempts on Castro, using "heroic" techniques like exploding cigars.

The book has 13 chapters, each written by a different

See BOOK on Page 4.

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www.aggiecatholic.org
Pastoral Team
Rev. Michael J. Sis, Pastor
Rev. David A. Konderla, Associate Pastor
Campus Ministers - Deacon Bill Scott, Martha Tonn, Lillian Smith, Maureen Murray, Heidi Nicolini
Daily Masses
Mon.-Fri.: 5:30 p.m.
Sat.: 10:30 a.m. (Korean)
Weekend Masses
Sat.: 5:30 p.m. (English), 7:00 p.m. (Spanish)
Sun.: 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 7:00 p.m.

Church of Christ
Bryan / College Station Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class 9:00 a.m., Worship 10:00 a.m., Wednesday Bible Class 7:00 p.m., College Station Conference Center (409) 731-1230
Email: mark-d@tamuc.edu

United Methodist
A&M United Methodist
417 University Dr. (on Northgate) • 846-8731
Sunday Services: 8:50 & 11:00 a.m., College Sunday School 9:45
Sr. Pastor Jerry Neff
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